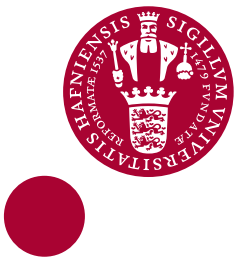


Ballots and Blue Helmets

The dynamics of UN peacekeeping deployments around post-conflict elections

Hansen, Bertel Teilfeldt

Publication date:
2014

Document version
Peer reviewed version

Ballots and Blue Helmets

The dynamics of UN peacekeeping deployments around post-conflict elections

August 29, 2014

EARLY DRAFT - PLEASE DO NOT CITE WITHOUT PERMISSION

Abstract

This paper provides a piece to the puzzle of why early post-conflict elections have been so frequent in the post-Cold War era when they are widely believed to be prone to result in renewed violence. I contend that their popularity in part stems from their utility as an exit strategy for peacekeeping missions. Using an original dataset on UN resolutions, I argue that as the objectives of peacekeeping become increasingly broad and difficult to evaluate, elections provide missions with a uniquely concrete event that signals the completion of their task, thus giving mission principals an incentive to push for fast elections. This proposition is investigated using the IPI database on UN deployment levels at the monthly level. The data show that UN personnel rapidly accumulate before the first election in a mission and then leave almost as rapidly afterwards. This post-election reduction in personnel levels is mostly due to a large number of countries pulling out entirely, rather than all contributing countries uniformly reducing deployments. I find that neither levels of violence on the ground nor changing views on peacekeeping exit strategies in the UN can account for the observed patterns.

KEYWORDS: Civil war, peacekeeping, United Nations, post-conflict elections, public administration theory, performance indicators

Introduction

Peace agreements in the civil wars of the post-Cold War era have been defined by elections. Since 1989, more than 40 % of all agreements struck have contained clauses promising national elections (Harbom, Högbladh, and Wallensteen 2006). Further, the average time elapsed from the end of conflict till election day has decreased from 5.5 years to just 2.7 (Brancati and Snyder 2011).

The UN has contributed significantly to this development and has actively enabled post-conflict elections worldwide through both assistance and intervention (Farer, Rich, and Newman 2004). Meanwhile, a growing literature in the field of conflict studies has joined practitioners in pointing out the dangers of holding elections in the wake of civil war. A number of studies find that violence is often a tool of electoral competition in such elections (Machado, Scartascini, and Tommasi 2011; Steele 2011; Wilkinson and Wilkinson 2006), and several scholars conclude that the elections themselves can increase the likelihood of renewed fighting (Brancati and Snyder 2012; Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom 2008; Dunning 2011; Flores and Nooruddin 2012). Overall, the view on quick post-conflict elections in the field is almost uniformly negative.[1]

This raises the question of why these early elections have become so frequent when they are widely considered to be so dangerous.

The literature is rather silent on this question save for an exploratory analysis of post-conflict election timing by Brancati and Snyder (2011). The authors find a number of factors associated with early post-conflict elections such as decentralized political systems characterized by proportional representation, low numbers of displaced persons, the signing of truces or settlements, previous elections, and UN interventions.

Using detailed monthly data on UN personnel contributions coupled with public administration theory, this paper delves into the association between early post-conflict elections and UN interventions and argues that these elections may in part be held because they constitute the most attractive exit strategy for international missions.

I use the theory on performance indicators of Smith (1995) to explain how the numerous, ambitious, and highly abstract goals of modern-day peacekeeping conspire to make measuring a mission's success or failure an almost impossible task. This shifts focus away from the more elusive objectives of state- and capacity building and over to the concrete and visible task of holding an election. In order to get troops home, a mission needs to show that it has completed its objective, and the only objective it can unambiguously complete is to hold an election. Accordingly, elections assume top priority.

To investigate this proposition I first construct an original dataset of all UN mission mandates and demonstrate that the number of mission objectives has increased substantially since the Cold War and that elections are now much more frequently among them. I then use data on monthly UN personnel

[1] For a notable exception, see Matanock (2017).

contributions from the IPI database and election data from NELDA to show that both the number of combat troops and the number of UN personnel in general appear largely a function of the timing of the first election in a mission. Troop and general personnel levels exhibit a distinctive hill-shaped relationship with time around the first election that peaks on election day and then declines. This post-election reduction in personnel levels is found to be due to some countries pulling out entirely, rather than all contributing countries uniformly reducing deployments. The patterns appear independent of the number of casualties and hold both before and after the "No exit without a strategy" debate in the UN at the turn of the millennium. Interestingly, for elections marred by violence, the data indicate that peacekeepers tend to start withdrawing in a similar fashion to other elections, but then return after about two years.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows: I start off by discussing the literature on the causes and consequences of post-conflict elections before providing a brief overview of the evolution of UN peacekeeping operations over time. I then use the concept of tunnel vision from performance indicator theory to argue how the nature of modern mission objectives may make implementation of elections assume top priority, whereupon I provide evidence consistent with this claim using the combined data from IPI and NELDA. Before concluding, I investigate some alternative explanations of the observed patterns. The final section sums up and discusses implications for policy and the literature on conflict as well as some limitations of this study.

Post-conflict elections

As Dunning (2011) notes, the literature on the causes and consequences of democratization and the literature on civil war and rebellion have with few exceptions evolved in relative isolation of one another. In the last couple of years, however, this has begun to change, and post-conflict elections are fast becoming a hot topic in conflict studies.

The main question of this recent literature is arguably whether and how post-conflict elections affect the likelihood of violence returning. This question has been approached from several different angles.

Through a formal contest function, Chacón, Robinson, and Torvik (2011) model the choice armed groups face between fighting and competing in elections. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the authors find that democracy is unlikely to be stable when two competing groups are equally large, because both their chances of winning an election and of winning a war are increasing in group size. Therefore, democracy may only be stable when one group is significantly larger than the other.

Steele (2011) argues that elections can facilitate the intentional displacement of civilians by armed groups. She points out that armed groups fighting over control of an area have an incentive to purge it of civilians loyal to the other side as they can provide it with shelter, resources, and recruits. However, civilians will have an incentive not to reveal where their loyalties lie in order to avoid

being displaced. If parties competing in an election are affiliated with the warring factions, the election results can facilitate forced displacement by revealing loyalties and showing which side a given community supports.

Even more grim conclusions about the relationship between fighting and voting are drawn by Flores and Nooruddin (2012) and Brancati and Snyder (2012) who both estimate the association between election timing and conflict risk directly.

Flores and Nooruddin (2012) model the competing risks of a country's post-conflict phase ending in either recurrence or recovery and find that early elections, especially in new democracies, are associated with a faster recurrence of war. They estimate that unless elections are delayed at least two years after the end of fighting in new democracies and one year in established democracies, war is likely to return shortly after election day.

Though using a different dataset and modelling approach, Brancati and Snyder (2012) reach qualitatively similar conclusions. They show that the timing of elections is negatively correlated with the probability of recurrence, and their models predict substantively large increases in conflict risk when elections are held in the immediate aftermath of war.

On the whole, the literature on fighting and voting has produced rather dismal conclusions about the pacifying potential of post-conflict elections. One thing that is lacking, though, is an explanation for why early post-conflict elections have then become so popular.

In a paper leading up to their study on the impact of election timing on conflict recurrence, Brancati and Snyder (2011) provide a first cut at an inquiry into the correlates of early post-conflict elections. The paper has a quite explorative design and finds several variables to be related to the timing of post-conflict elections such as the nature and history of the political system on the ground, the type of termination of the previous conflict, the number of displaced people, and the presence of a UN mission.

The authors offer three explanations for the correlation between UN intervention and election timing: They argue that peacekeepers can reassure both sides that an election will not lead to renewed fighting, that peacekeepers may simply have a preference for early elections, and that the presence of peacekeepers may be an indicator of powerful rebels, which leads governments to attempt to secure power through elections rather than fighting.

They do not consider, however, that UN presence might be associated with early post-conflict elections because elections offer international missions an attractive exit strategy.

While having avoided systematic empirical scrutiny so far, the idea of post-conflict elections as an exit strategy for peacekeeping missions has been advanced from different corners of conflict studies. In the constructivist branch, criticism has been raised of the knee-jerk tendency of Western, liberal actors to rely on fast elections as a means of "legitimate" exit (see e.g. Barnett and Finnemore

(1999), and both constructivist and more mainstream policy analysts have pointed to instances of premature withdrawal of troops after the conclusion of the first successful election (see e.g. Caplan (2006); Dobbins et al. (2001); Hirschmann (2012); Paris (1997)). Some scholars even propose that elections purely serve as an exit strategy regardless of their legitimacy or potential pacifying effects (Collier 2010).

This paper follows the latter, cynical view of the UN's promotion of early post-conflict election and argues that the narrow focus on holding elections is a paradoxical, but natural and perhaps inevitable consequence of the massive broadening of the objectives of UN missions that has taken place since the end of the Cold War.

The evolution of UN peacekeeping

The evolution of peacekeeping can be divided roughly into two phases; the first being the traditional peacekeeping of the Cold War era and the second being the multidimensional operations of the nineties and the new millennium.[2]

The founding principle of the UN was collective security, but while the Cold War raged this was heavily overshadowed by great power competition. The Cold War peacekeeping missions were designed to contain and manage interstate conflicts with potential to escalate into global and ultimately nuclear conflicts. The main objective was to avoid the involvement of the rival superpowers and smaller wars therefore only had to be stemmed before they spread.

With the possible exception of ONUC in the DR Congo (1960-1964), UN missions during the Cold War had relatively narrow objectives and usually confined themselves to monitoring borders and establishing buffer zones following cease-fire agreements. They mainly consisted of small, lightly armed troop contingents provided by countries that maintained neutrality in the superpower rivalry, and their troops only had mandate to use force in self-defence.

The modern multidimensional operations arose as a consequence of both the increased and largely unforeseen demands of persistent intrastate conflict in weak and failed states and the abrupt change in strategic context caused by the fall of the Soviet Union (which arguably also caused the occurrence of many of these new intrastate conflicts). Free of the constraints of the superpower rivalry, the post-1989 Security Council could authorize more and much more ambitious missions.

From the five PKO's operating in 1988, the number had increased to 11 by 1992, and then to 17 by 1994. Costs increased along with the number of missions and today the financial expense of peacekeeping have exceeded all other areas of UN activity combined.

Perhaps more significant than the growth in the number of missions is the growth in the number and the scope of the objectives that missions are supposed to complete. Whereas Cold War missions

[2]See e.g. Durch (1993) or Ramsbotham, Miall, and Woodhouse (2011) for a more comprehensive review of the evolution of UN peacekeeping.

were minimalist and narrowly focussed on keeping an already establish peace, newer mission are tasked with a wide range of duties including maintaining security, demobilizing and reintegrating former combatants, promoting human rights, protecting the environment, building institutions of governance, and conducting elections. Conducting elections, especially, has gained prominence as the goals of peacekeeping have expanded.

To substantiate the observation that UN mission objectives seems to have expanded over time and that elections have gained prominence among them, I have coded the text of all Security Council resolutions pertaining to peacekeeping missions throughout the history of the UN for the number of objectives in their mandate and for whether or not the mandate includes holding elections (see coding manual in the appendix).

Below I plot the number of different objective points in the final mandate of each mission along with the proportion of mission mandates in a year that include elections or referenda as a separate objective.[3]

[3]Specifically, I plot the sum of the number of points in the establishing resolution and the number of points in any subsequent resolutions that add tasks to the mission. If a new resolution replaces the original mandate I substitute the mission's score with the number of points in the replacement resolution. I obtain essentially identical results when using only the number of points in the establishing resolution.

Figure 1: UN mission mandate points, lowess smoother

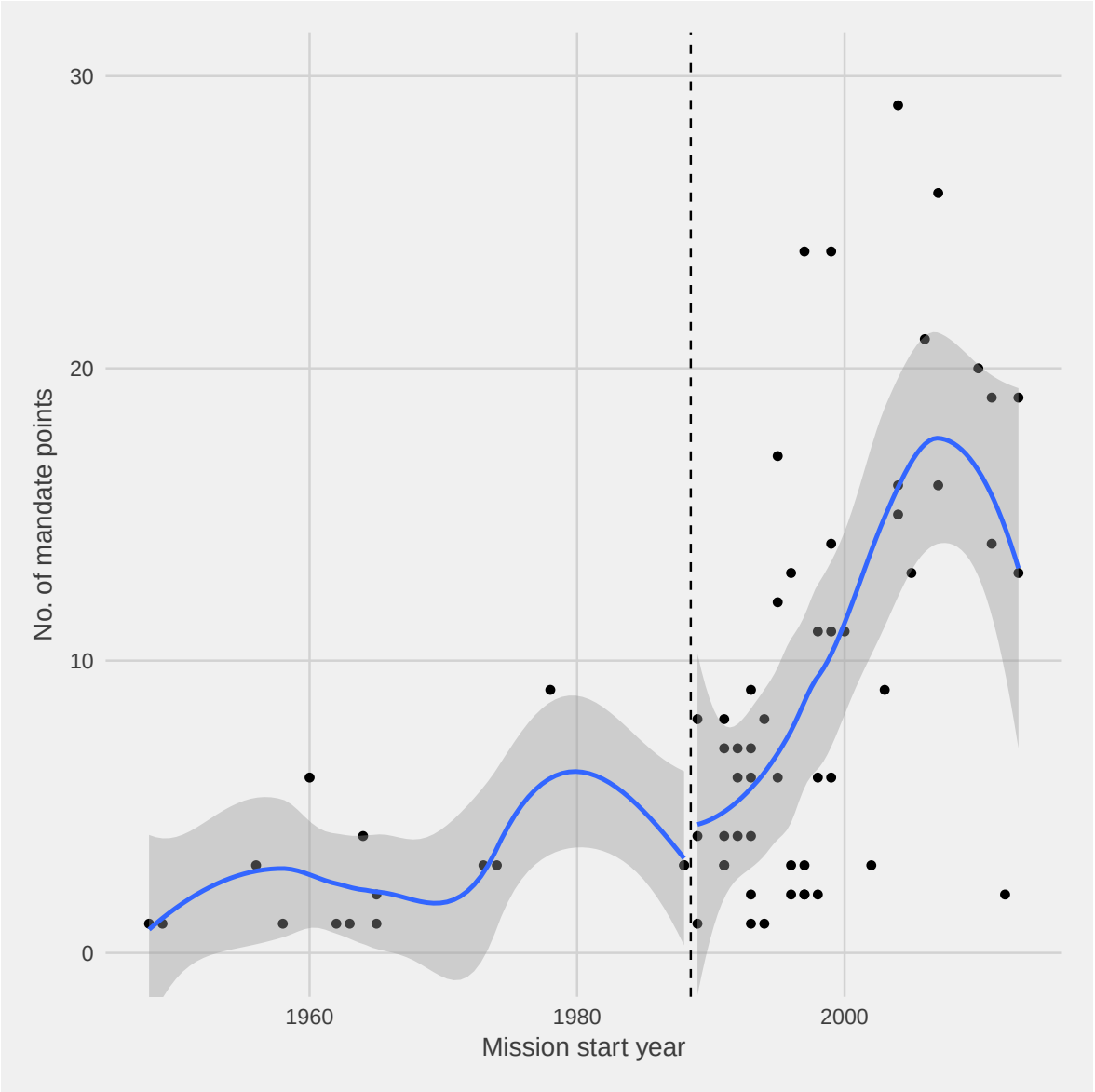
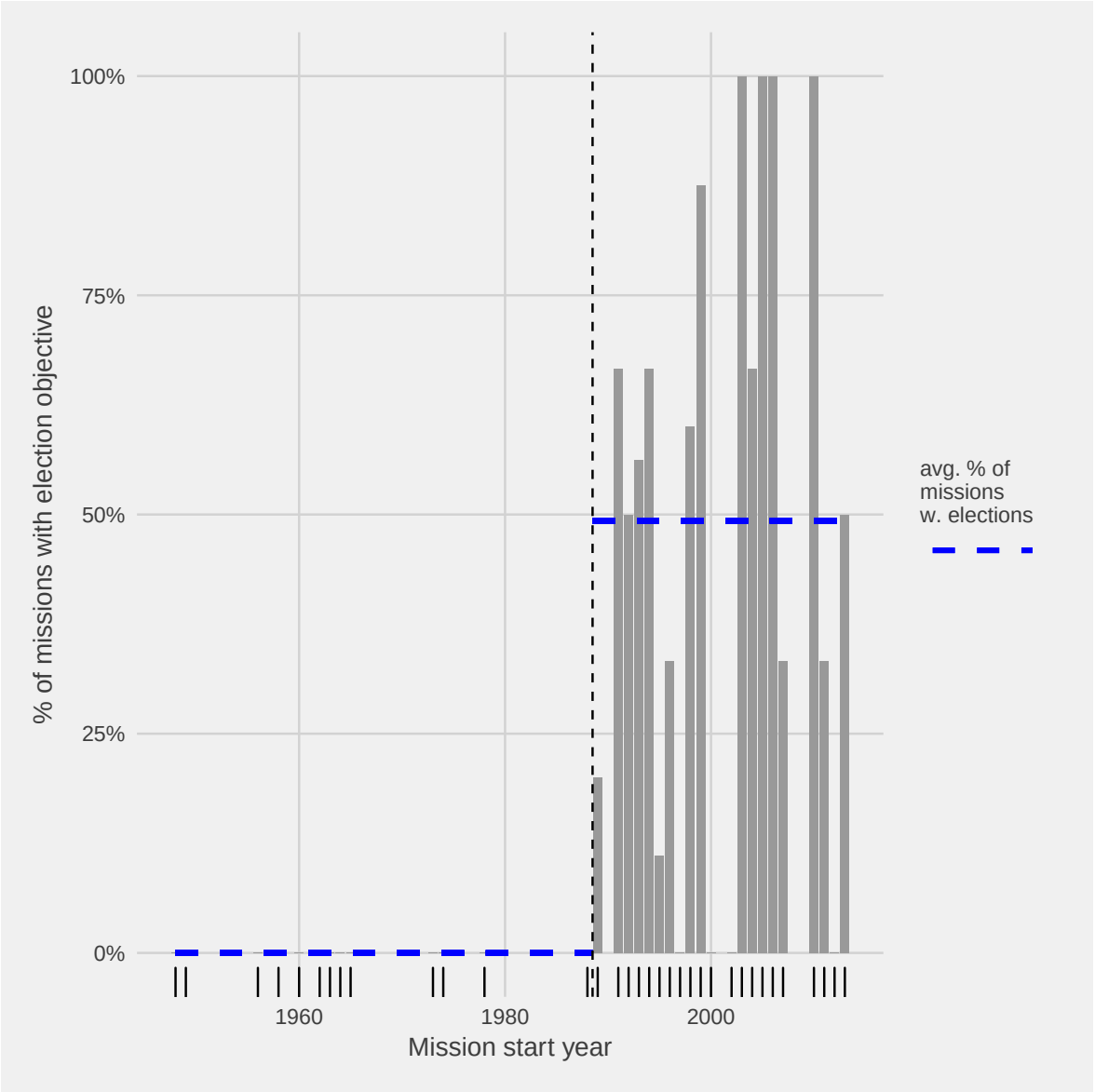


Figure 2: Elections as mission objectives



Figures 1 and 2 clearly confirm the narrative presented above. The number of objectives that missions need to complete has virtually exploded since 1989 and so has the likelihood of national elections being among them.

Whereas the average pre-Cold War mission had just three objectives and UNIFIL in Lebanon as the most extensive one had nine (which it only reached after 1989), the average post-Cold War mission have about 10 and peak at the 29 of UNOCI in Côte d'Ivoire.

The share of missions whose mandate includes elections exhibits an even steeper increase. No mission that went operational before 1989 ever received any mandate to carry out elections. After 1989, however, about half of all missions have had elections as a part of their mandate. Regardless of activation year, the most comprehensive missions have also by far been the ones most likely to include an election objective in their mandate.

A look at the wording of resolutions from before and after the Cold War suggests that the increased number of objectives documented above is also indicative of increased scope and complexity.

Compare, for instance, resolution 1509, which in 2003 established the UNMIL mission in Liberia after the Second Liberian Civil War, with the 1964 establishment of UNFICYP in Cyprus through resolution 186. Both missions are still ongoing and have as their main objective to enforce a truce struck between armed factions of a local population, but here the similarities end.

Whereas the mandate of UNFICYP simply states that its function should be to "(...) *use its best efforts to prevent a recurrence of fighting and, as necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return of normal conditions;*" (UNSC 1964), UNMIL's mandate has 19 separate objectives, including such extensive tasks as assisting in establishing an administrative structure at both the national and local level, consolidating governmental institutions by helping to create a national legal framework and to carry out judicial and correctional reforms, promoting and upholding human rights, and restructuring both the police and the military (UNSC 2003). The 19^{th} point of the UNMIL mandate states that the mission should help carry out national elections no later than 2005.

In sum, UN mission mandates have indeed become "multidimensional" since the end of the Cold War. I argue that these broad and numerous objectives can produce very serious and perhaps insurmountable problems for the evaluation of mission success, and that this may make peacekeepers focus narrowly on elections at the expense of other goals such as development and stability.

Election tunnel vision

Measuring performance is a central feature of the management of any organisation. Investors in firms need to know whether to sell or hold on to their shares, governments need to know whether to cut down on or maintain different parts of their bureaucracy, and citizens need to know whether or not

to vote for the incumbent government in the next election. Principals require information on the performance of their agents in order to control them (Jacobides and Croson 2001).

The principals of public organisations face a significantly more difficult problem than their counterparts in the private sector, however, because they lack the unifying concept of revenue as a measure of the benefits of an organisation's activities (Smith 1995). Consequently, a large literature in the fields of public administration and management has been dedicated to devising performance indicators that allow for valid measurement of the performance of public organisations (see e.g. Behn (2003); Jackson (2005); Zafra-Gómez, López-Hernández, and Hernández-Bastida (2009)).

The need for such performance measurement is especially acute for temporary public organisations that are assigned a specific task and then disbanded once it is completed, because their principal needs to know when a task has been completed in order to know when to disband the organisation. In the context of UN peacekeeping missions, one must be able to tell whether or not the mission has completed its objectives in order to judge whether or not soldiers can be sent home. The need for evaluation is likely much more pressing for peacekeeping missions than for other temporary organisations, however, because of their extremely high costs; both in terms of money and the risk of casualties. The principals of peacekeeping missions will have strong incentive to detect their success as soon as possible, so that the troops can be sent home, money can be saved, and the political repercussions of dead soldiers can be avoided.[4]

Herein lies a fundamental problem in multidimensional peacekeeping as it can be extremely hard to measure when its many abstract goals have been reached. This, I argue, can lead to an overemphasis on the measurable to the potential detriment of the stability of mission countries.

One of the unintended consequences of performance measures identified by the public administration literature is known as "tunnel vision" (Smith 1995). Tunnel vision refers to situations where organisations are expected to complete a wide range of objectives, but only one or a few of these are readily measurable. This leads the principal and thus the agent to focus narrowly on the factors that can be measured at the expense of the ones that cannot. Smith cites the example of maternity service managers in the UK National Health Service being increasingly held to account for only the perinatal mortality rate, because it is the only one of their numerous objectives that can be quantified (Smith 1995, 284).

In various guises, the idea of tunnel vision as a response to the implementation of performance indicators has been applied to a number of areas of public administration. Bevan and Hood (2006) examine New Labour's introduction of performance measures in the English National Health Service and find systematic gaming and overemphasis on quantifiable indicators such as ambulance response time, accident and emergency department waiting time, and the number of patients being given a hospital bed within 12 hours of emergency admission. Heckman, Heinrich, and Smith (1997) investigate US

[4]On the high political costs of casualties see e.g. Klarevas (2002).

job training centres and show that the use of readily measurable short-run outcomes of trainees in assessing bureaucrat performance makes centres focus on goals that are at best uncorrelated and at worst negatively correlated with employment and earning prospects for clients in the long run. In the context of the British prison system, Bird et al. (2005) point out that when principals employ the number of proven cases of prisoner-on-prisoner assault as a measure of prison performance, they unwittingly give prison managers incentive to expend resources trying to avoid investigation of alleged assaults so that fewer assaults are proven, instead of expending resources on actually improving prisoner safety.

Descriptions of tunnel vision-like behaviour can also be found in the literature on the assessment of military operations. In the US, especially, debate between advocates of the use of quantitative performance indicators such as questionnaire responses and body counts, and traditionalists arguing that war is too complex and chaotic to be measured has been going on at least since the Korean War (see e.g. Carpenter and Andrews (2009); Daddis (2011); Kapstein (2012); Mattis (2008); Vego (2006)). More recently, tunnel vision behaviour has been discussed in the ISAF counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan, where concerns have been raised that units may, among other things, overemphasize the construction of schools when these feature prominently in the core metric by which their performance is measured (Connable 2012).

Such tunnel vision behaviour, I argue, captures well what seems to have happened to missions when the UN went from traditional peacekeeping to multidimensional peacekeeping. As shown above, multidimensional UN missions are expected to perform a large number of task and for most of them principals cannot easily – or perhaps at all – determine whether they have been completed or not. How does one tell, for example, when a mission is done promoting and upholding human rights? Or consolidating government institutions? Even measurement of seemingly quite concrete objectives such as the disarmament of former combatants can be extremely problematic (Muggah 2005).[5]

The one common objective that can readily be measured is an election. Elections constitute unmistakable proof that the mission has completed an objective and "handed power back to the locals". Though elections in and of themselves are hardly a sufficient measure of democracy (see e.g. Przeworski et al. (2000)) the two are often equated in popular discourse (Schmitter and Karl 1991), and unlike other commonly proposed democratic characteristics such as the rule of law or an active civil society, elections are extremely visible. Elections might not measure democracy or successful peacekeeping, but they are themselves easy to measure.

Thus, in an environment characterized by a myriad of difficult-to-measure performance indicators, national elections are obvious candidates for tunnel vision. In fact, indicators of election tunnel vision

[5]Interestingly, disarmament processes conducted by donors and governments have themselves shown signs of severe tunnel vision, as many have been narrowly focused on the number of weapons collected rather than the number of weapons in circulation. These quantities are not as negatively proportional as one might think, because weapons collection usually works by purchasing weapons, which increases demand for them and thus has ambiguous effects on the number in circulation (see e.g. Muggah (2005)).

can often be found in the text of mission mandates, and sometimes the very day of the first post-conflict election is even set as the exit date for peacekeepers. The first expansion of UNAVEM's mandate in Angola, for instance, is quite clear on this point:

"*UNAVEM's new mandate would last from the date on which the ceasefire enters into force, namely 31 May 1991, until the day following the completion of presidential and legislative elections in Angola, which are to be held in the period between 1 September and 30 November 1992*"

(UN 1991)[6]

Such a narrow focus on pulling out immediately after the first election is clearly at odds with the idea of multi-dimensional peacekeeping and may serve to increase the risk of conflict returning if the literature on post-conflict elections is right.

Observable implications

What empirical patterns should one expect to observe if the behaviour of UN missions was indeed characterized by election tunnel vision? For starters, if UN missions were pushing for fast elections, the presence of a mission should lead to faster post-conflict elections, all other things being equal. Brancati and Snyder (2011) have already shown – with at least some other things being equal – that UN missions are in fact associated with faster elections. One should probably be careful in the causal interpretation of this association, however, since missions are obviously not randomly assigned to countries and a host of unobservables could plausibly confound the relationship.[7]

The same goes for another natural implication, namely that if missions (successfully) use elections as an exit strategy, missions with elections should end sooner than other missions. Using the NELDA and the IPI databases, it can be shown fairly easily that the opposite is actually the case: Missions with elections tend to last two to three times *longer* than missions without. Again, it is not clear how much one can learn about the effect of elections on mission duration from this association, since missions with elections are likely not comparable to missions without. Absent a strong identification strategy, these associations may not provide much leverage on the importance of election tunnel vision. Instead of comparing countries with missions to countries without missions, or missions with elections to missions without elections, I therefore opt for a different route and look at the observable implications that election tunnel vision has for the timing of the deployment and the extraction of peacekeepers within missions.

Under election tunnel vision one would expect personnel deployment to be concentrated around the time of the first election. In order to carry out an election, a mission will – at least temporarily –

[6]For other missions with the first election set as their exit date see Hirschmann (2012).

[7]For example, Brancati and Snyder find that UN interventions are highly dependent upon the military outcome of the conflict, something that is likely correlated with numerous difficult-to-measure characteristics of the situation on the ground. For more on the determinants of peacekeeping deployments see e.g. Gilligan and Stedman (2003) or Kathman and Melin (2016).

need reasonably stable conditions, and therefore one would expect the number of personnel on the ground to accumulate in the period leading up to the election, peaking on election day itself. Once the election has been carried out, however, the mission's only measurable objective has been completed and its personnel can be pulled out. Accordingly, one would further expect personnel levels to fall again after the election, notwithstanding the fact that the immediate post-election period has been identified as being highly prone to renewed conflict.

In other words, the idea of election tunnel vision predicts personnel levels to be a decreasing function of absolute time distance from the election. If this expectation is correct it will manifest itself in a hill-shaped distribution centred on election day.

Data and research design

To investigate this, I use the IPI database of post-Cold War peacekeeping operations (Perry and Smith 2013)[8] to create a dataset containing monthly levels of total UN personnel, UN troops, and number of contributing states in all countries that have had active UN peacekeeping missions at some point between 1990 to 2016. This yields 78 missions in 40 countries and a total of 12420 monthly observations.[9] The median mission lasts about 2.7 years, but quite often a nominally new mission will begin immediately after another has ended, resulting in much longer deployments. In the analyses below I treat missions that follow one another without interim as single mission periods.

About 41% of all country months in the data have active missions. The distribution of personnel levels in mission months is highly skewed to the right, however, meaning that most months only have a low number of operatives present.

The 12420 monthly observations constitute my base dataset. Onto these I merge dates and characteristics of national elections from the NELDA database (Hyde and Marinov 2012) in order to create my main independent variable, *months around first election*, which measures the months before and after the first election held in a mission country following the deployment of a UN contingent. 73% of all countries in the dataset have held one or more national elections while a mission has been operative within their territory. Further summary statistics are presented in the appendix.

Results

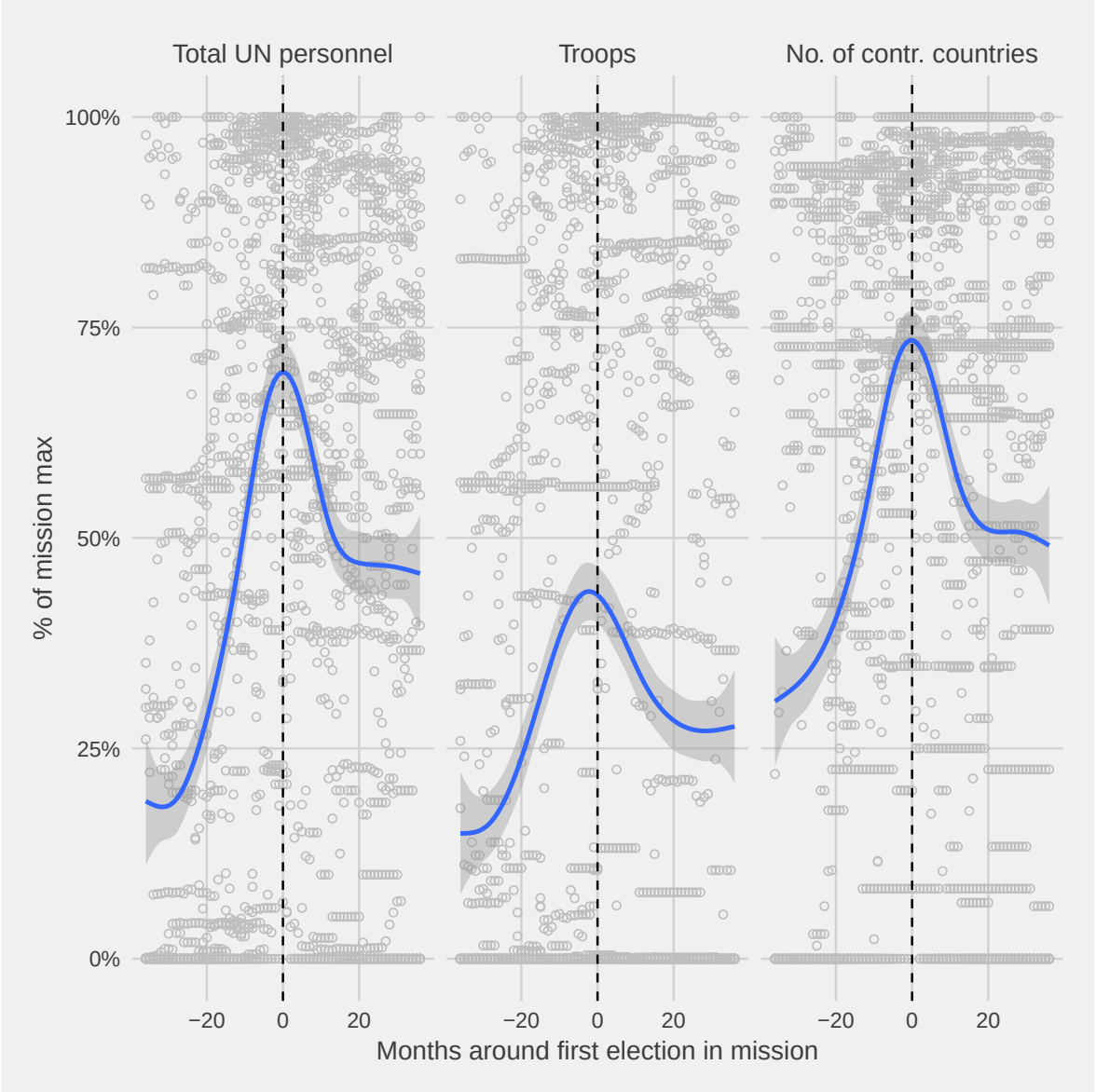
I start off by doing a visual, non-parametric inspection of the patterns of troop and personnel levels around the first election in all countries that have had an active mission present since 1990. Since some missions have far more personnel than others, I normalize each deployment value by the maximum

[8] For a similar database constructed from the same UN release see Kathman (2013).

[9] The dataset is smaller than the expected $(2016 - 1990 + 1) * 12 * 40 = 12960$ country months, since some countries do not exist for the entire period. I use the state system database from Correlates of War to determine the correct time series for each country (Correlates of War Project 2017).

value in the the given mission period.

Figure 3: UN commitments around first election, lowess smoother



The first two panels of Figure 3 show that both the total number of UN personnel and the number UN troops conform to the expected hill-shaped pattern. The lowess smoothers show a clear and substantial accumulation of both types in the months leading up to the election and distinctive peaks pretty much exactly on election day itself. Crucially, both types also start decreasing immediately after the month of the election, though this decrease is most pronounced for UN troops. Contrary to what one would expect under complete election tunnel vision, the deployment levels do not quite reach their pre-elections lows, but remain somewhat elevated in the post-election period.

Interestingly, the number of countries contributing personnel to a mission exhibits a similar hill-shaped pattern to the deployment levels. In the lead-up to the first election in a mission more and more countries begin contributing personnel, and the number of contributors also peaks on election day and then declines fairly rapidly afterwards. This indicates that the post-election reduction in personnel levels is mostly due to some countries pulling out entirely, rather than all contributing countries uniformly reducing deployments.

In order to adjust for period effects (and later, include additional covariates) I move to a parametric approach and estimate the following two-way fixed effects models:

$$UN\ Personnel_{it} = \boldsymbol{\pi TimeAroundElection_{it}} + a_i + u_t + v_{it} \tag{1}$$

$$UN\ Troops_{it} = \boldsymbol{\pi TimeAroundElection_{it}} + a_i + u_t + v_{it} \tag{2}$$

$$No.\ of\ contributors_{it} = \boldsymbol{\pi TimeAroundElection_{it}} + a_i + u_t + v_{it} \tag{3}$$

Where $UN\ Personnel$ measures the absolute level of total UN personnel in country i at month t, $UN\ Troops$ measures the absolute level of UN troops, and $No.\ of\ contributors$ measures the absolute number of contributing countries. $\boldsymbol{TimeAroundElection}$ is a vector of dummy variables each marking off a separate six-month period before or after the first national election in a mission country (plus a single dummy marking just the election month). Together, they cover a six-year period around each election. $\boldsymbol{\pi}$ is vector of coefficients.

The three remaining terms represent unobserved factors affecting $UN\ Personnel$, $UN\ Troops$, or $No.\ of\ contributors$. a is time-invariant and is removed by country level fixed effects, u is unit-invariant and is removed by month fixed effects, and v represents unobserved determinants of the outcome variables that vary across both country and month.

With country- and month-level fixed effects and binary right-hand-side variables, the elements of $\boldsymbol{\pi}$ give the average "double difference" between countries with elections in a mission and countries without. The first part of this double difference consists of the average within-country difference between each of the six-month periods marked by a dummy and all of the months outside the six-year period jointly covered by all the dummies. The second part is given by the average within-country difference between the same periods, only in the countries that did not have elections while a mission was present. The final double difference is then simply the difference between these two differences.[10]

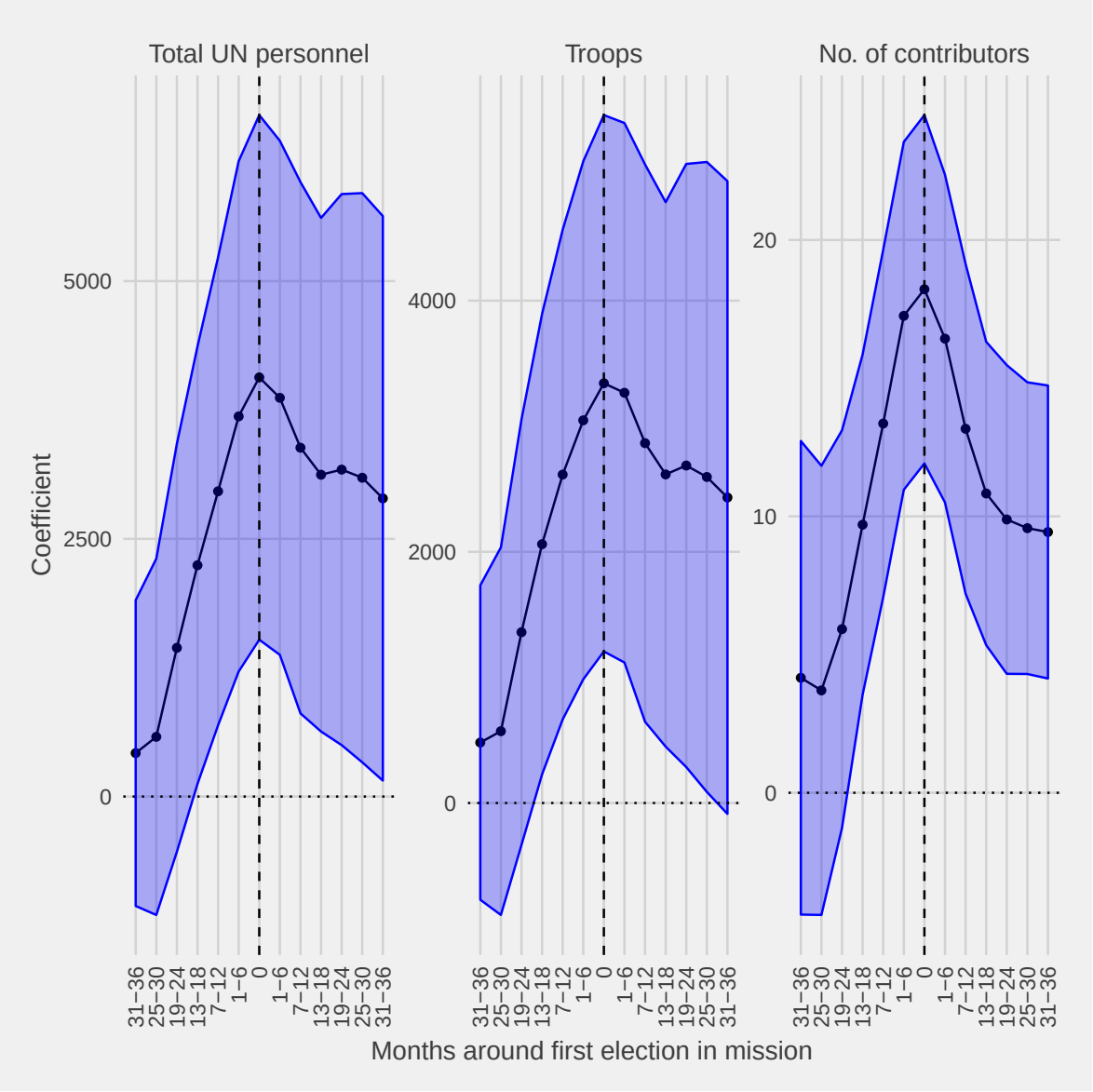
For the main models, I opt for OLS estimation. Since the three outcomes are rightfully count variables, I also estimate the equations as fixed effect poisson models (see appendix). Results are robust across

[10] While this makes for some fairly unintuitive interpretations of estimates, the main thing to look for when evaluating the consistency between the data and the testable implications of the theory is the relative difference in the estimates for the periods around the election month. The key point is whether the double differences increase leading up to the election, peak on election day, and then begin to decline fairly rapidly afterwards.

estimation procedures. In all models, standard errors are clustered on country.

Below, I plot coefficients from the 13 dummies in each of the models along with their 95% confidence intervals (to conserve space and ease interpretation, tables are relegated to the appendix).

Figure 4: UN commitments around first election, two-way fixed effects



The two-way fixed effect models yield essentially the same conclusions as Figure 3. Troop levels, general personnel levels, and the number of contributing countries all accumulate rapidly in the period leading up to the first election in a mission, peak at election day, and then start falling immediately after. For the deployment levels, the decline is a bit slower than the accumulation, which again indicates that election tunnel vision is likely not the sole determinant of deployment levels.

In terms of numbers of operatives and countries, the estimated changes are substantial. The average difference in the number of general UN personnel present between the month of the first election and months outside the six-year period marked by the dummies is over 4000 people larger than the average difference between the same periods in countries that did not have elections while a UN mission was active. When looking solely at UN troops, this difference in differences is at about 3300 people. Consistent with the notion of election tunnel vision the deployment levels decline quite fast once the election is over with: After a year, general personnel levels are reduced by almost 1000 people on average, and troop levels are reduced by over 700 people.

The difference is even more pronounced for the number of contributing countries. The average double difference in the election month is at 18 countries, which declines to just 11 a year after the first election. This difference is quite substantial since the median number of contributing countries in a mission month is 23. Again, this indicates that the reduction in personnel levels occur because a large number of contributing countries simply pull out of the mission completely once the first election has been held.

All in all, both the non-parametric and parametric approach reveal patterns that are highly consistent with election tunnel vision being an important determinant of UN deployment levels.

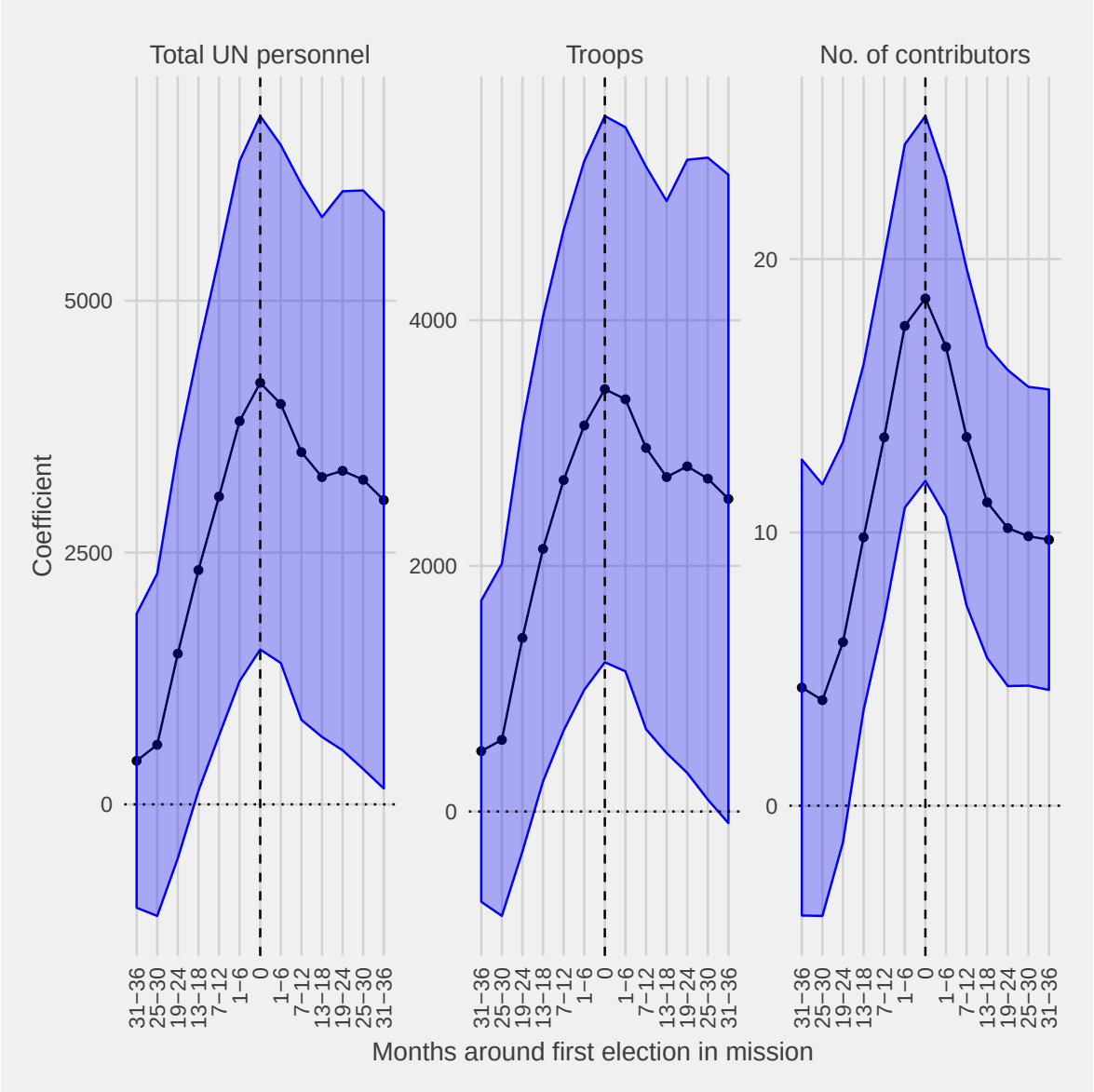
Alternative explanations

So far the inspection of the data has shown that UN deployment levels and the number of contributing countries do in fact increase rapidly right before the first election in a mission and begin to decline almost as rapidly immediately after.

This is very consistent with election tunnel vision, but it could also be consistent with different dynamics. First, despite the findings of the post-conflict election literature and the general view of practitioners, the post-election period might just not be very dangerous. It could be the case that countries pull out because their job is done and violence has been quelled. One way to investigate this alternative explanation for the hill-shaped deployment patterns is to include the number of conflict-related casualties as a predictor of deployment levels. If deployment changes were in fact made in response to violence levels, including casualties should reduce the estimates on the election timing dummies.

I draw casualty data from the expansive and highly detailed UCDP GED database and aggregate their best estimates of event-level casualties to a monthly sum (Sundberg and Melander 2013). Below I plot coefficients from the same two-way fixed models as above, only with $log(casualties+1)$ included as a control:

Figure 5: UN commitments around first election, casualty levels

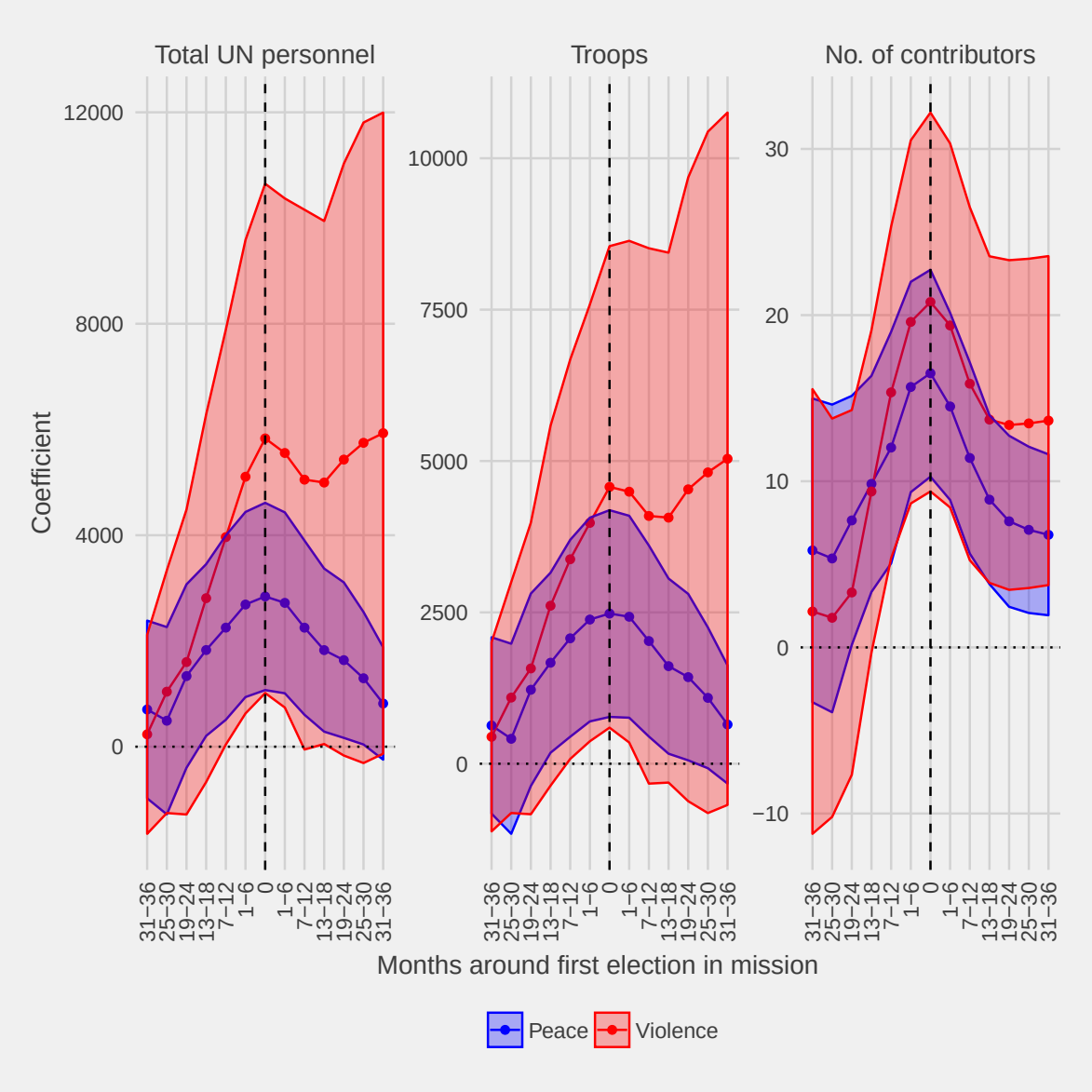


The estimates in Figure 5 are almost indistinguishable from those in Figure 4, and thus there is little indication that casualty levels are the true explanation of the hill-shaped pattern. Actually, casualties do not appear to correlate with deployment levels at all (see Table 5 in the appendix). This lack of relationship is consistent with findings by Benson and Kathman (2014).

One might be sceptical of the usefulness of casualty levels as a proxy for threat level, since it may itself be affected by deployment levels. Realized casualty levels could be unrelated to deployment levels if deployments were made in response to correctly anticipated violence and also had a depressing effect on casualties. This would lead to low levels of casualties both in periods without much UN presence (because UN contributors correctly anticipates low violence levels and do not show up), and low levels of casualties in periods with a large UN presence (because UN personnel prevent casualties).

A better way of addressing the same alternative explanation could be to single out elections that are evaluated as violent by observers. To do this, I use NELDA's coding of election protests and riots (*Nelda29*), government violence against protesters (*Nelda31*), and general, lethal election violence (*Nelda33*) to create one set of timing dummies for elections were one or more of these variables scored "yes" ("violent elections") and another set for elections were they all scored "no" ("peaceful elections"). Of the 35 elections in the data that were the first to be held during a mission period, NELDA scores 14 with a "yes" on one or more of these variables (5 out of 14 on all three). Below I plot the estimates from the same two-way fixed effects models as above, only with two separate sets of timing dummies for violent and peaceful elections.

Figure 6: UN commitments around first election, dummies split on "peace" vs. "violence"



The peaceful elections look very much like the average elections presented above, whereas the violent elections reveal an interesting variation on the pattern: Until about a year after the election, deployments are similar to other cases; a fast build-up before election day followed by a withdrawal. This trend then appears to halt and reverse as troops and general personnel return to the country such that after two to three years, deployment levels are about equal to or slightly higher than those of the election month. This is not the case for the number of contributing countries, though, which continues to decline.

The post-election extraction and the subsequent return of personnel after violent elections could indicate that missions attempt to exit once the election objective has been completed, but are then forced back by renewed violence in the country. However, one should be wary of drawing strong inferences here since the violent elections exhibit somewhat greater variance than other elections and thus the standard errors on their dummies increase by a non-negligible amount. Indeed, save for the period right around the election, most of the estimates for deployment levels in the violent elections are insignificant at the conventional level of 0.05.

Turning to another natural alternative explanation, it could be the case that even though post-conflict elections might be dangerous, UN contributors do not know or believe that. Personnel could be pulled out rapidly after the first election in a mission not because mission principals look for a measurable criterion of success in order to reduce their exposure, but simply because they believe in the pacifying effect of elections.

This could certainly be a plausible explanation for UN behaviour in the early nineties, when the victory of democracy and liberalism over autocracy and communism was fresh in memory and there appeared to have been a strong belief in elections as a tool for building peace and prosperity (Hirschmann 2012). However, once the UN had accumulated some high-profile failed post-conflict elections, perhaps most notably Angola and Cambodia in 1993, attitudes started to change. In paticular, after the "No exit without a strategy" debate in 2000, any notions of the panacea of post-conflict elections seem to have been dispelled (Hirschmann 2012).

If the hill-shaped patterns are in fact explained by mission principals believing in the pacifying effects of elections, these patterns should therefore start to disappear after 2000. To investigate this, I again create two separate sets of time dummies; one set for elections held before 2000 and one set for elections held in or after 2000. 20 out of the 35 elections are held before 2000 and 15 are held in or after 2000.

Figure 7: UN commitments around first election, dummies split on the year 2000

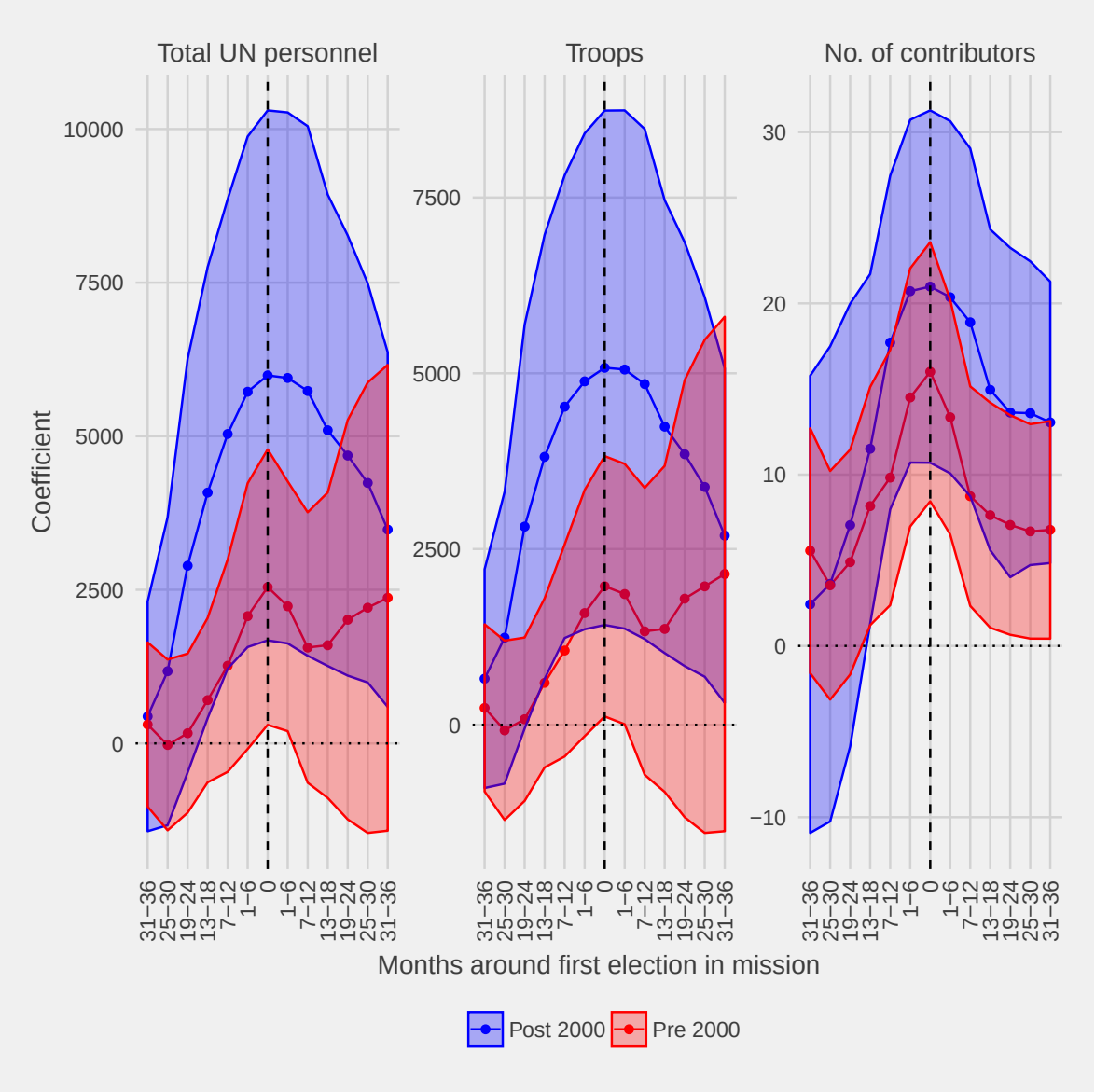


Figure 7 shows little consistency with this "zeitgeist" interpretation. If anything, troop and general personnel levels appear more hill-shaped after 2000 than before. Thus the failed elections of the nineties and the debate on exit strategies in 2000 do not seem to have had an impact on deployment dynamics on the ground.

In sum, the data do not conform very well to the alternative explanations investigated here. First, casualty levels do not predict deployment levels at all. Second, the hill-shaped pattern persists for violent elections – at least up to about a year after the election has been held. Interestingly, there are signs that UN personnel then begin returning to the mission country, which may be due to renewed violence. However, the estimates are too noisy and uncertain to draw strong inferences about these violent elections outside a narrow window around election day. Third, none of the observed

patterns seem consistent with post-Cold War election optimism driving deployments, since the hill shape centred on election day actually becomes more pronounced after 2000, when the belief in post-conflict elections should have started to fade.

Conclusion

This paper set out to provide a piece to the puzzle of why early post-conflict elections have become so frequent when they are widely believed to be dangerous undertakings prone to result in conflict relapse. I provided evidence consistent with the claim that early post-conflict elections have proliferated at least partly because they serve as an attractive exit strategy for UN peacekeeping missions with increasingly complex and unverifiable objectives.

The argument took its outset in the fact that countries that have had the UN intervene in a civil war tend to have earlier post-conflict elections than other countries. This was coupled with the historical observation that UN peacekeeping is generally believed to have become much more involved and multidimensional since the end of the Cold War – an observation that was substantiated by coding all resolutions pertaining to mission mandates throughout the history of the UN. This original dataset of mandate scope revealed that the number of tasks that UN missions are asked to complete have indeed increased markedly since 1989, and that holding national elections have much more frequently been among them.

The performance indicator theory from Smith (1995) was then used to argue that the increase in the number and scope of their objectives may make missions focus narrowly on elections. This "election tunnel vision" can arise because mission principals have a pressing need to determine when their objectives have been completed so personnel can be pulled out and casualties avoided. When the majority of objectives are very broad and difficult to measure, however, the need to show fast completion may lead missions to overemphasise the often sole measurable goal of holding elections.

The observable implications of this proposition was investigated using data from the IPI on monthly deployment levels and number of contributing states in each UN mission active between 1990 and 2016. The data were combined with election variables from NELDA to show that both deployment levels and the number of contributing countries appeared to be largely a function of time around the first national election in a mission. Consistent with the hypothesis of election tunnel vision, troop and personnel levels surged in the period leading up the election, peaked at election day itself, and then fell rapidly afterwards. The data indicated that this post-election reduction in personnel levels was mostly due to a large number of countries pulling out entirely, rather than all contributing countries uniformly reducing deployments. Two alternative explanations for the observed patterns were then examined, but neither fit as well as the notion of election tunnel vision.

The significance of these results are twofold: First, the consistency between the empirical evidence

and predictions of classic public administration theory suggests that the literature on post-conflict elections could benefit from focussing more on the incentive structures that govern the organisations and individuals that decide on when and whether to hold these elections. More broadly, it indicates that the discussion on assessing military operations could benefit from explicit use of public administration theory. Perverse incentives are ubiquitous in public organisations and those acting in conflict settings seem no different.

Second, the results have implications for the UN and its contributor governments. Given that the international community desires to avoid the many recurring intrastate conflicts that continue to plague countries around the globe despite the large drop in interstate conflict over the last decades, they might need to reassess their own contribution to them.

If early post-conflict elections are indeed dangerous and the observed patterns in troop and personnel levels are indeed evidence of election tunnel vision, UN peacekeeping practice should change. The sudden disappearance of a superpower rivalry after the fall of the Soviet Union gave the UN and its contributor governments unprecedented free reign to assign the massive and extremely complex task of state-building to the many new multidimensional peacekeeping operations. While this development might have been beneficial to UN budgets and perhaps also to the building of some states, giving missions that many and that broad and unmeasurable objectives has perhaps not been beneficial for peace.

These developments have definitely not gone unnoticed in the UN, and though the data do not show it, there are some qualitative indication of changes in policy. For example, the high-priority missions in East Timor and Bosnia and Herzegovina have arguably had a much less singular focus on getting out after election day (Caplan 2006), but it remains to be seen whether this continues for future and perhaps less high-profile and well-funded missions.

Further work on the role of peacekeepers in post-conflict elections could fruitfully address some of the limitations of the present study. Though I find election tunnel vision to be the explanation most consistent with the data, inferring definitively about group and individual motivations from aggregated behavioural data is a daunting task and several mechanisms may be working in conjunction to produce the observed patterns. One alternative that I am not able to address here is that peacekeepers might be aware of the dangers of early elections, but feel pressured by local and international actors to hold them and then get out. This would either entail that these local and international actors were ignorant of the dangers of early post-conflict elections or that they were willing to risk rekindling conflict. Much ground could be gained from unpacking these mechanisms further.

References

Barnett, M. N. and M. Finnemore (1999). The politics, power, and pathologies of international organizations. *International organization 53*(4), 699–732.

Behn, R. D. (2003). Why measure performance? Different purposes require different measures. *Public administration review 63*(5), 586–606.

Benson, M. and J. D. Kathman (2014). United nations bias and force commitments in civil conflicts. *The Journal of Politics 76*(2), 1–14.

Bevan, G. and C. Hood (2006). What's measured is what matters: targets and gaming in the english public health care system. *Public administration 84*(3), 517–538.

Bird, S. M., C. David, V. T. Farewell, G. Harvey, H. Tim, and C. Peter (2005). Performance indicators: good, bad, and ugly. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society) 168*(1), 1–27.

Brancati, D. and J. L. Snyder (2011). Rushing to the polls: The causes of premature postconflict elections. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 55*(3), 469–492.

Brancati, D. and J. L. Snyder (2012). Time to kill: The impact of election timing on postconflict stability. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 57*(5), 822–853.

Caplan, R. (2006). After exit: Successor missions and peace consolidation. *Civil Wars 8*(3-4), 253–267.

Carpenter, P. M. and W. F. Andrews (2009). Effects-based operations: Combat proven. *Joint Force Quarterly 52*(1), 78–81.

Chacón, M., J. A. Robinson, and R. Torvik (2011). When is democracy an equilibrium? Theory and evidence from colombia's la violencia. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 55*(3), 366–396.

Collier, P. (2010). *Wars, guns, and votes: Democracy in dangerous places.* New York: Harper Perennial.

Collier, P., A. Hoeffler, and M. Söderbom (2008). Post-conflict risks. *Journal of Peace Research 45*(4), 461–478.

Connable, B. (2012). *Embracing the Fog of War: Assessment and Metrics in Counterinsurgency.* Santa Monica: Rand Corporation.

Correlates of War Project (2017). State system membership list, v2016. `http://correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/state-system-membership`. [Online; accessed 24-November-2017].

Daddis, G. A. (2011). *No Sure Victory: Measuring US Army Effectiveness and Progress in the Vietnam War.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dobbins, J., S. G. Jones, K. Crane, A. Rathmell, and B. Steele (2001). *The UN's Role in Nation-Building: From the Congo to Iraq*. Santa Monica: Rand Corporation.

Dunning, T. (2011). Fighting and voting: Violent conflict and electoral politics. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 55*(3), 327–339.

Farer, T. J., R. Rich, and E. Newman (2004). The promotion of democracy: International law and norms. In E. Newman and R. Rich (Eds.), *UN Role in Promoting Democracy: Between Ideals and Reality*, pp. 32–61. Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

Flores, T. E. and I. Nooruddin (2012). The effect of elections on postconflict peace and reconstruction. *The Journal of Politics 74*(02), 558–570.

Gilligan, M. and S. J. Stedman (2003). Where do the peacekeepers go? *International Studies Review 5*(4), 37–54.

Harbom, L., S. Högbladh, and P. Wallensteen (2006). Armed conflict and peace agreements. *Journal of Peace Research 43*(5), 617–631.

Heckman, J., C. Heinrich, and J. Smith (1997). Assessing the performance of performance standards in public bureaucracies. *The American Economic Review 87*(2), 389–395.

Hirschmann, G. (2012). Peacebuilding in un peacekeeping exit strategies: Organized hypocrisy and institutional reform. *International Peacekeeping 19*(2), 170–185.

Hyde, S. D. and N. Marinov (2012). Which elections can be lost? *Political Analysis 20*(2), 191–210.

Jackson, A. (2005). Falling from a great height: Principles of good practice in performance measurement and the perils of top down determination of performance indicators. *Local Government Studies 31*(1), 21–38.

Jacobides, M. G. and D. C. Croson (2001). Information policy: Shaping the value of agency relationships. *Academy of Management Review 26*(2), 202–223.

Kapstein, E. B. (2012). Measuring progress in modern warfare. *Survival 54*(1), 137–158.

Kathman, J. D. (2013). United nations peacekeeping personnel commitments, 1990–2011. *Conflict Management and Peace Science 30*(5), 532–549.

Kathman, J. D. and M. M. Melin (2016). Who keeps the peace? understanding state contributions to un peacekeeping operations. *International Studies Quarterly 61*(1), 150–162.

Klarevas, L. (2002). The "essential domino" of military operations: American public opinion and the use of force. *International Studies Perspectives 3*(4), 417–437.

Machado, F., C. Scartascini, and M. Tommasi (2011). Political institutions and street protests in latin america. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 55*(3), 340–365.

Matanock, A. M. (2017). Bullets for ballots: Electoral participation provisions and enduring peace after civil conflict. *International Security*.

Mattis, J. N. (2008). USJFCOM commander's guidance for effects-based operations. *Joint Force Quarterly 51*(4), 105–108.

Muggah, R. (2005). No magic bullet: A critical perspective on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and weapons reduction in post-conflict contexts. *The Round Table 94*(379), 239–252.

Paris, R. (1997). Peacebuilding and the limits of liberal internationalism. *International security 22*(2), 54–89.

Perry, C. and A. C. Smith (2013). *Trends in Uniformed Contributions to UN Peacekeeping: A New Dataset, 1991-2012*. New York: International Peace Institute.

Przeworski, A., M. E. Alvarez, J. A. Cheibub, and F. Limongi (2000). *Democracy and development: political institutions and well-being in the world, 1950-1990*, Volume 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ramsbotham, O., H. Miall, and T. Woodhouse (2011). *Contemporary conflict resolution*. Cambridge: Polity.

Schmitter, P. C. and T. L. Karl (1991). What democracy is... and is not. *Journal of democracy 2*(3), 75–88.

Smith, P. (1995). On the unintended consequences of publishing performance data in the public sector. *International journal of public administration 18*(2-3), 277–310.

Steele, A. (2011). Electing displacement: Political cleansing in apartadó, colombia. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 55*(3), 423–445.

Sundberg, R. and E. Melander (2013). Introducing the ucdp georeferenced event dataset. *Journal of Peace Research 50*(4), 523–532.

UN (1991). Report of the secretary-general on the united nations angola verification mission. *S/22627/91 (20 May 1991)*.

UNSC (1964). Resolution 186. *S/RES/5575/65*.

UNSC (2003). Resolution 1509. *S/RES/1509/03*.

Vego, M. N. (2006). Effects-based operations: A critique. *Joint Force Quarterly 42*(2), 51–57.

Wilkinson, S. I. and S. Wilkinson (2006). *Votes and violence: Electoral competition and ethnic riots in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

William, J. (1993). *The evolution of UN peacekeeping: case studies and comparative analysis*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Zafra-Gómez, J. L., A. M. López-Hernández, and A. Hernández-Bastida (2009). Evaluating financial performance in local government: maximizing the benchmarking value. *International Review of Administrative Sciences 75*(1), 151–167.

Ballots and Blue Helmets

The dynamics of UN peacekeeping deployments around post-conflict elections

April 1, 2019

Appendix

Steps in coding the objectives of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions

1. Locate a Peacekeeping Mission on the UN's "List of Peacekeeping operations 1948-2013" and find the official mission webpage using the UN Peacekeeping webpage (http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/)
2. On this page, locate the section describing the mission mandate and find the resolutions that set it out:
   (a) If the section describing the mission mandate does not refer to any resolutions, code 3a-e using the information on the official mission webpage under the section "Mandate"
   (b) If the section describing the mission mandate refers to more than 5 resolutions (a few pages refer to a very large number of resolutions), code 3a-e using the information on the official mission webpage under the section "Mandate"
   (c) If the section describing the mission mandate indicates a change in mandate that does not appear in any of the referred resolutions under paragraphs starting with the word "Decides", assume a new resolution and code 3a-e for this resolution using the information on the official mission webpage under the section "Mandate"
3. For every resolution referred to under the mandate section note the following:
   (a) The resolution number
   (b) The month and the year that the UNSC adopted the resolution
   (c) Whether or not the resolution establishes, adjusts, or revises the mission mandate:
      i. The resolution adjusts the mission mandate if it adds extra tasks to the original mandate
      ii. The resolution revises the mission mandate if it changes the content of the original tasks or reduces the total number of tasks that constitute the mission mandate
   (d) The total number of tasks that constitute the mission mandate located under resolution paragraphs beginning with the word "Decides"
      i. If the mission tasks are not described under any resolution paragraph beginning with the word "Decides", estimate the total number of tasks using the information on the official mission webpage under the section "Mandate"
   (e) Whether or not holding a national election is among the tasks of the mission
      i. Holding an election is among the tasks if any paragraph beginning with the word "Decides" obligates the mission to carry out, help carry out, prepare for, or otherwise facilitate an election or a referendum in the mission country

ii. If the mission tasks are not described under any resolution paragraph beginning with the word "Decides", assess whether holding an election is among the tasks using the information on the official mission webpage under the section "Mandate"

Summary statistics

Table 1: Summary statistics

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Total UN personnel	12420	1576.4	4454.8	0	44901
Troops	12420	1348.0	3984.4	0	43837
No. of contributors	12420	10.8	17.2	0	74
Casualties	11768	114.1	2625.3	0.0	237989.7
Year	12420	2003.3	7.7	1990	2016

Table 2: Election months vs. other months

	Mean		
	Total UN personnel	Troops	No. of contributors
All months for missions w/o elections	3351.3	2952.6	33.7
Months w/o elections for missions with elections	3940.8	3356.4	25.1
Election month for missions with elections	4992.9	4131.7	26.8

Table 3: No. of countries with one or more of various election types (out of 40)

	N
Any election with mission	29 (72.5%)
Peaceful election with mission	19 (47.5%)
Violent election with mission	13 (32.5%)
Election with mission pre 2000	20 (50%)
Election with mission post 2000	12 (30%)

Regression tables

Table 4: UN commitments around first election, 1990-2016

	Dependent variable:		
	Total UN personnel	Troops	No. of contributors
31-36 months before election	421.7	481.7	4.2
	(756.8)	(638.7)	(4.4)
25-30 months before election	579.5	572.1	3.7
	(881.7)	(746.6)	(4.1)
19-24 months before election	1,442.9	1,360.2	5.9
	(1,009.7)	(864.3)	(3.7)
13-18 months before election	2,244.1*	2,061.1*	9.7**
	(1,082.8)	(935.3)	(3.1)
7-12 months before election	2,961.2*	2,615.2**	13.4***
	(1,158.1)	(994.7)	(3.2)
1-6 months before election	3,688.0**	3,047.1**	17.3***
	(1,262.9)	(1,052.2)	(3.2)
Election month	4,066.0**	3,342.0**	18.2***
	(1,298.4)	(1,089.5)	(3.2)
1-6 months after election	3,868.0**	3,266.3**	16.4***
	(1,272.1)	(1,095.8)	(3.0)
7-12 months after election	3,384.0*	2,865.2*	13.2***
	(1,314.9)	(1,131.9)	(3.0)
13-18 months after election	3,121.8*	2,616.2*	10.8***
	(1,270.9)	(1,105.8)	(2.8)
19-24 months after election	3,171.7*	2,687.2*	9.9***
	(1,363.6)	(1,225.0)	(2.8)
25-30 months after election	3,093.0*	2,596.1*	9.6***
	(1,408.5)	(1,279.4)	(2.7)
31-36 months after election	2,892.6*	2,432.5	9.4***
	(1,397.0)	(1,285.2)	(2.7)
Country & month FE's	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Observations	12,420	12,420	12,420

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
se's clustered by country

Table 5: Including casualty levels

	Dependent variable:		
	Total UN personnel	Troops	No. of contributors
31-36 months before election	432.5	491.8	4.3
	(744.6)	(625.9)	(4.3)
25-30 months before election	591.9	583.3	3.9
	(867.2)	(731.5)	(4.0)
19-24 months before election	1,497.0	1,413.5	6.0
	(1,036.6)	(887.1)	(3.7)
13-18 months before election	2,325.9*	2,138.7*	9.8**
	(1,118.4)	(966.0)	(3.2)
7-12 months before election	3,056.4*	2,698.8**	13.5***
	(1,211.1)	(1,040.5)	(3.4)
1-6 months before election	3,805.3**	3,143.2**	17.6***
	(1,317.4)	(1,098.2)	(3.4)
Election month	4,186.2**	3,439.3**	18.6***
	(1,351.3)	(1,134.6)	(3.4)
1-6 months after election	3,975.2**	3,356.6**	16.8***
	(1,312.2)	(1,130.2)	(3.2)
7-12 months after election	3,497.3**	2,960.7*	13.5***
	(1,356.2)	(1,168.7)	(3.1)
13-18 months after election	3,249.8*	2,723.5*	11.1***
	(1,316.5)	(1,146.7)	(2.9)
19-24 months after election	3,312.4*	2,810.5*	10.2***
	(1,416.1)	(1,273.5)	(2.9)
25-30 months after election	3,223.2*	2,710.5*	9.9***
	(1,465.6)	(1,333.6)	(2.8)
31-36 months after election	3,020.7*	2,545.3	9.7***
	(1,461.0)	(1,346.9)	(2.8)
log(casualties+1)	34.3	29.5	−0.2
	(103.6)	(93.8)	(0.5)
Country & month FE's	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Observations	11,768	11,768	11,768

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
se's clustered by country

Table 6: Violent vs. peaceful elections

	Dependent variable:		
	Total UN personnel	Troops	No. of contributors
peaceful elections			
31-36 months before election	703.8	632.0	5.8
	(857.5)	(743.1)	(4.7)
25-30 months before election	491.4	412.1	5.4
	(903.7)	(800.9)	(4.7)
19-24 months before election	1,335.7	1,221.8	7.6*
	(885.1)	(810.5)	(3.8)
13-18 months before election	1,828.4*	1,668.3*	9.8**
	(828.7)	(758.5)	(3.3)
7-12 months before election	2,252.3*	2,071.3*	12.0***
	(889.5)	(829.6)	(3.6)
1-6 months before election	2,689.4**	2,381.4**	15.7***
	(893.2)	(858.4)	(3.2)
Election month	2,841.7**	2,480.2**	16.5***
	(903.5)	(871.0)	(3.2)
1-6 months after election	2,721.1**	2,427.9**	14.5***
	(872.9)	(850.9)	(2.9)
7-12 months after election	2,251.4**	2,026.6*	11.4***
	(840.6)	(804.8)	(2.9)
13-18 months after election	1,826.8*	1,612.1*	8.9***
	(786.8)	(738.2)	(2.6)
19-24 months after election	1,637.3*	1,430.2*	7.6**
	(750.3)	(701.2)	(2.6)
25-30 months after election	1,294.7*	1,088.5	7.1**
	(639.3)	(593.3)	(2.6)
31-36 months after election	816.8	648.0	6.8**
	(542.1)	(498.0)	(2.5)
violent elections			
31-36 months before election	234.0	444.7	2.2
	(960.4)	(797.1)	(6.8)
25-30 months before election	1,041.0	1,092.7	1.8
	(1,171.5)	(972.9)	(6.1)
19-24 months before election	1,601.2	1,573.9	3.3
	(1,471.2)	(1,228.8)	(5.6)
13-18 months before election	2,809.3	2,610.1	9.4
	(1,774.4)	(1,516.6)	(5.0)
7-12 months before election	3,964.5*	3,377.5*	15.4**
	(2,002.3)	(1,682.9)	(5.1)
1-6 months before election	5,106.5*	3,978.3*	19.6***
	(2,284.6)	(1,840.4)	(5.6)
Election month	5,831.4*	4,572.0*	20.8***
	(2,457.7)	(2,028.8)	(5.8)
1-6 months after election	5,555.9*	4,493.0*	19.4***
	(2,456.4)	(2,113.7)	(5.6)
7-12 months after election	5,051.8	4,092.4	15.9**
	(2,604.8)	(2,255.8)	(5.4)
13-18 months after election	4,996.8*	4,064.9	13.7**
	(2,523.8)	(2,232.7)	(5.0)
19-24 months after election	5,430.7	4,532.5	13.4**
	(2,856.0)	(2,628.3)	(5.1)
25-30 months after election	5,748.5	4,812.2	13.5**
	(3,090.8)	(2,870.8)	(5.1)
31-36 months after election	5,930.8	5,037.0	13.7**
	(3,094.0)	(2,917.3)	(5.1)
Country & month FE's	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Observations	12,420	12,420	12,420

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
se's clustered by country

Table 7: Splitting on the year 2000

	Dependent variable:		
	Total UN personnel	Troops	No. of contributors
year $\geq$ *2000*			
31-36 months before election	439.3	656.1	2.4
	(954.0)	(793.7)	(6.8)
25-30 months before election	1,175.2	1,239.4	3.6
	(1,279.3)	(1,059.6)	(7.1)
19-24 months before election	2,892.6	2,819.0	7.1
	(1,717.2)	(1,465.2)	(6.6)
13-18 months before election	4,082.8*	3,812.0*	11.5*
	(1,873.4)	(1,611.6)	(5.2)
7-12 months before election	5,036.9**	4,525.0**	17.7***
	(1,949.3)	(1,678.9)	(5.0)
1-6 months before election	5,724.0**	4,885.7**	20.7***
	(2,119.9)	(1,799.5)	(5.1)
Election month	5,990.6**	5,078.3**	21.0***
	(2,200.6)	(1,866.7)	(5.2)
1-6 months after election	5,948.9**	5,053.7**	20.4***
	(2,204.8)	(1,880.5)	(5.2)
7-12 months after election	5,736.6**	4,847.0**	18.9***
	(2,199.2)	(1,851.0)	(5.2)
13-18 months after election	5,097.4**	4,241.0**	15.0**
	(1,957.5)	(1,643.7)	(4.8)
19-24 months after election	4,685.9*	3,849.3*	13.6**
	(1,828.0)	(1,537.9)	(4.9)
25-30 months after election	4,240.3*	3,382.9*	13.6**
	(1,657.6)	(1,377.3)	(4.5)
31-36 months after election	3,480.3*	2,690.8*	13.1**
	(1,472.5)	(1,214.0)	(4.2)
year $<$ *2000*			
31-36 months before election	307.5	239.8	5.6
	(681.9)	(606.6)	(3.6)
25-30 months before election	−24.9	−79.0	3.5
	(709.3)	(651.0)	(3.4)
19-24 months before election	166.3	79.1	4.9
	(660.8)	(592.7)	(3.3)
13-18 months before election	704.6	596.6	8.2*
	(682.7)	(613.7)	(3.5)
7-12 months before election	1,264.9	1,056.4	9.8**
	(881.8)	(769.4)	(3.8)
1-6 months before election	2,071.6	1,589.0	14.5***
	(1,103.6)	(893.4)	(3.8)
Election month	2,544.2*	1,970.3*	16.0***
	(1,143.8)	(944.7)	(3.9)
1-6 months after election	2,232.4*	1,859.6*	13.4***
	(1,037.1)	(944.9)	(3.5)
7-12 months after election	1,560.5	1,329.1	8.7**
	(1,123.0)	(1,041.0)	(3.3)
13-18 months after election	1,597.9	1,363.9	7.6*
	(1,268.4)	(1,183.1)	(3.4)
19-24 months after election	2,012.8	1,793.8	7.1*
	(1,657.9)	(1,586.3)	(3.3)
25-30 months after election	2,208.9	1,968.7	6.7*
	(1,870.5)	(1,789.3)	(3.2)
31-36 months after election	2,370.0	2,145.1	6.8*
	(1,934.3)	(1,866.9)	(3.2)
Country & month FE's	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Observations	12,420	12,420	12,420

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
se's clustered by country

Table 8: Poisson models

	Dependent variable:		
	Total UN personnel	Troops	No. of contributors
31-36 months before election	−0.20	−0.11	0.11
	(0.44)	(0.41)	(0.36)
25-30 months before election	−0.05	0.01	0.08
	(0.48)	(0.47)	(0.36)
19-24 months before election	0.47	0.55	0.25
	(0.40)	(0.39)	(0.28)
13-18 months before election	0.82**	0.90**	0.50*
	(0.32)	(0.31)	(0.21)
7-12 months before election	1.05***	1.10***	0.70**
	(0.32)	(0.32)	(0.22)
1-6 months before election	1.21***	1.21***	0.88***
	(0.30)	(0.30)	(0.21)
Election month	1.30***	1.29***	0.93***
	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.21)
1-6 months after election	1.26***	1.27***	0.86***
	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.20)
7-12 months after election	1.17***	1.17***	0.73***
	(0.32)	(0.33)	(0.20)
13-18 months after election	1.11***	1.11**	0.63***
	(0.33)	(0.35)	(0.19)
19-24 months after election	1.14**	1.14**	0.60***
	(0.36)	(0.38)	(0.18)
25-30 months after election	1.13**	1.13**	0.60***
	(0.36)	(0.40)	(0.17)
31-36 months after election	1.07**	1.07**	0.59***
	(0.37)	(0.40)	(0.16)
Country & month FE's	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Observations	12,420	12,420	12,420

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
se's clustered by country
the estimates shown are unexponentiated coefficients